A Brief Guide to The Fundamental Beliefs of Moderate Shia Islam

A Brief Guide to The Moderate Shia Creed

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1.1 Tawheed

What is our belief about God's Power, and signs of His Glory?

We believe that Allah the Exalted is the Creator of all creation, in fact the whole universe and all creation are signs of His Glory that direct us to His Exalted Existence (SWT). At which His Wisdom is evident and recognizable to seeing eyes, from the very smallest creations like the atoms, molecules, germs and tiny bugs like the nat or the flea, to the large animals like the elephant, from the blades of grass and herbage, to the tall cedar and pine trees, from the specks of dust to the mountains peaks, from the low earth to the high skies and illuminating stars everything in creation is certainly a sign that He (SWT) has Created it.

Therefore the more we ponder and think about the secrets of creation, the more we can be reminded and learn about The Greatness of Allah (SWT) and His Being All Knowing and All Powerful. Consequently as sciences' progress and advance through the stages of unveiling and development, and new horizons of insights are opened up to mankind, our knowledge about this vast world is unfolded. Which may serve as a source of more love for Allah (SWT), and be a means to realize His Existence and something about His Glory and Exaltedness due to His actions.

وَفِي الْأَرْضِ آيَاتٌ لِّلْمُوقِنِينَ (٢٠) وَفِي أَنفُسِكُمْ ۚ أَفَلَا تُبْصِرُونَ (٢١)

And in the earth there are signs for those who are sure, And in your own souls; will you not then see? (51:20-21)

نَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ (١٩٠) الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَٰذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ (١٩١)

Most surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day there are signs for men who understand. Those who remember Allah, standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: Our Lord! Thou hast not created this in vain! Glory be to Thee; save us then from the chastisement of the fire: (3:190-191)

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيْمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ ۚ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ (٢٣) هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ ۖ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَىٰ ۚ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ (٢٤)

He is Allah, besides Whom there is no god; the King, the Holy, the Giver of peace, the Granter of security, Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Supreme, the Possessor of every greatness Glory be to Allah from what they set up (with Him). He is Allah the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner; His are the most excellent names; whatever is in the heavens and the earth declares His glory; and He is the Mighty, the Wise. (59:23:24)

All things other than Allah (SWT) are in deep poverty, they are in need more than they can profoundly realize, because all creation is deeply dependent on Allah (SWT). Therefore we can realize and find noteworthy His Creativity over all creation, and His Dominance over all things. In fact His Majesty and Power shows its presence evident as a shining light upon all contingent beings, who otherwise would be deep in the abyss of non existence if not for The Exalted Being.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَنتُمُ الْفُقَرَاءُ إِلَى اللَّهِ ۖ وَاللَّهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الْحَمِيدُ (١٥)

O men! you are they who stand in need of Allah, and Allah is He Who is the Self-sufficient, the Praised One. (35:15)

When we consider existence we can say it is either contingent or necessary. A contingent existence is something which is needy in it's very self, it is in fact needy in its initiation and it's entire survival of its being. Hence it needs something to bestow upon it it’s existence, otherwise it would not exist. In philosophical terms we can describe a contingent being as

a thing which is between the two edges of existence and non existence, that is necessity and impossibility to exist hence it requires something to push it into existence and this notion also unveils to us that the self of this being is a possible being or in technical terms a contingent being due to its necessary need within its very essence (i.e its contingency). Since contingency is necessarily contingent it requires a cause to cause it to exist.

If we imagine two possibilities for its cause, the first possibility is that its cause is another contingent being, and the second is that it is a necessary being that is something which self-subsistent itself and needs nothing. Then we reject the first option as if it were a contingent being then that contingent being would need a cause and then we are faced with the same problem, hence this chain would go on for infinity this is called infinite regression which is rejected intellectually as every line or chain must have a starting point. However even if we did hypothetically have this infinite chain of causes which are contingent we would then be faced with the issue that this whole chain is contingent in itself hence would require a necessary cause to cause it.

Therefore we must accept that the cause that bestows contingent existents their existence is a Necessary Being which is not in need of anything and is self-subsistent due to its self. That Necessary Being, we term in philosophical and theological studies as Al-Wajib Al Wujood. Therefore we say that Necessary Being is Allah (SWT).

1.2 Does God have a physical body?

We believe that Allah the Exalted is too Great and Exalted, too Glorious to be seen like visible things, which would imply that He The Exalted would have the limited attributes of creation (contingent beings) which as we stated above would entail being needy. Allah (SWT) is not a contingent being, rather He is the Necessary Being, Allah (SWT) is The Creator not the created. Therefore we state Allah (SWT) is above all the limitations of creation and greater than the limited attributes of created contingent beings.

لَّا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ ۖ وَهُوَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ (١٠٣)

Vision comprehends Him not, and He comprehends (all) vision; and He is the Knower of subtleties, the Aware. (6:103)

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ ۚ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ لَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ مَن ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِندَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ ۚ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۖ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ ۚ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ ۖ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ (٢٥٥)

Allah is He besides Whom there is no god, the Everliving, the Self-subsisting by Whom all subsist; slumber does not overtake Him nor sleep; whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His; who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission? He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot comprehend anything out of His knowledge except what He pleases, His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of them both tires Him not, and He is the Most High, the Great. (2:55)

لَمَّا جَاءَ مُوسَىٰ لِمِيقَاتِنَا وَكَلَّمَهُ رَبُّهُ قَالَ رَبِّ أَرِنِي أَنظُرْ إِلَيْكَ ۚ قَالَ لَن تَرَانِي وَلَٰكِنِ انظُرْ إِلَى الْجَبَلِ فَإِنِ اسْتَقَرَّ مَكَانَهُ فَسَوْفَ تَرَانِي ۚ فَلَمَّا تَجَلَّىٰ رَبُّهُ لِلْجَبَلِ جَعَلَهُ دَكًّا وَخَرَّ مُوسَىٰ صَعِقًا ۚ فَلَمَّا أَفَاقَ قَالَ سُبْحَانَكَ تُبْتُ إِلَيْكَ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (١٤٣)

And when Musa came at Our appointed time and his Lord spoke to him, he said: My Lord! show me (Thyself), so that I may look upon Thee. He said: You cannot (bear to) see Me but look at the mountain, if it remains firm in its place, then will you see Me; but when his Lord manifested His glory to the mountain He made it crumble and Musa fell down in a swoon; then when he recovered, he said: Glory be to Thee, I turn to Thee, and I am the first of the believers. (7:143)

We believe that anything that seemingly may appear as anthropomorphism in a particular related text are metaphorical and hence we can note even in the topic of the discussion of seeing Allah (SWT) with the heart as has been stated in Nahjul Balagha that:

Dhi’lib al-Yamani asked Amir al-mu'minin whether he had seen Allah, when he replied, "Do I worship one whom I have not seen?" Then he enquired, "How have you seen Him?" Then Amir al-mu'minin replied:

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام) وقد سأله ذِعلبٌ اليماني فقال: هل رأيت ربّك يا أميرالمؤمنين؟ فقال(عليه السلام): أَفأَعْبُدُ مَا لا أَرَى ؟ قال: قال: وكيف تراه؟ لاَ تُدْرِكُهُ الْعُيُونُ بِمُشَاهَدَةِ الْعِيَانِ، وَلكِنْ تُدْرِكُهُ الْقُلُوبُ بِحَقَائِقِ الاْيمَانِ، قَرِيبٌ مِنَ الاَْشْيَاءِ غَيْرُ مُلاَمِس، بَعِيدٌ مِنْهَا غَيْرُ مُبَايِن، مُتَكَلِّمٌ بِلاَ رَوِيَّة، مُرِيدٌ بِلاَ هِمَّة، صَانِعٌ لاَ بِجَارِحَة، لَطِيفٌ لاَ يُوصَفُ بِالْخَفَاءِ، كَبِيرٌ لاَ يُوصَفُ بِالْجَفَاءِ، بَصِيرٌ لاَ يُوصَفُ بِالْحَاسَّةِ، رَحِيمٌ لاَ يُوصَفُ بِالرِّقَّةِ، تَعْنُو الْوُجُوهُ لِعَظَمَتِهِ، وَتَجِبُ الْقُلُوبُ مِنْ مَخَافَتِهِ.

Eyes cannot see Him face to face, but hearts perceive Him through the realities of belief. He is near to things but not (physically) contiguous. He is far from them but not (physically) separate. He is a speaker, but not with reflection. He intends, but not with preparation. He molds, but not with (the assistance of) limbs. He is subtle but cannot be attributed with being concealed. He is great but cannot be attributed with haughtiness. He sees but cannot be attributed with the sense (of sight). He is Merciful but cannot be attributed with weakness of heart. Faces feel low before His greatness and hearts tremble out of fear of Him. (Nahjul balaghah, sermon 179)

In fact the most important thing is to have real authentic realization and awareness of Allah the Exalted as He is the Unique Being and nothing else is like Him.

In light of this we reject polytheism which is the greatest sin and the big insult to our intellect, and we also seek to reject any notion that would entail the scent of polytheism in our thoughts and the gem of the blessed intellect is a thing which certainly recognizes Allah and His Authority.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَغْفِرُ أَن يُشْرَكَ بِهِ وَيَغْفِرُ مَا دُونَ ذَٰلِكَ لِمَن يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَن يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ افْتَرَىٰ إِثْمًا عَظِيمًا (٤٨)

Surely Allah does not forgive that anything should be associated with Him, and forgives what is besides that to whomsoever He pleases; and whoever associates anything with Allah, he devises indeed a great sin. (4:48)

وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ (٦٥)

And certainly, it has been revealed to you and to those before you: Surely if you associate (with Allah), your work would certainly come to naught and you would certainly be of the losers. (39:65)

Tawheed's Position in Usool Al-Deen

Tawheed (Uniqueness) of Allah (SWT) is the most fundamental of islamic beliefs, and a pillar which must be present for one to be held within the folds of Islam. In fact our actions as Muslims (i.e. those who submit to the will and command of Allah) should be in such a manner that they are directed to Allah the Unique.

All things are in deep poverty of Allah the Exalted and are in dire need of Allah the Exalted as we have stated earlier, therefore we must direct our thoughts, actions and sayings and our lives to Allah (SWT), to live a fruitful age in accordance with the best of our abilities

and in harmony with what Allah (SWT) has revealed and the guidance He has sent for our facility.

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم مُّسْلِمُونَ (١٠٢)

O you who believe! be careful of (your duty to) Allah with the care which is due to Him, and do not die unless you are Muslims. (3:102)

Tawheed in fact is a belief which is found within one's intellect, such a firm belief is that which connects to all aspects of human thought, spirituality and movement in this worldly life toward the eternal abode.
The Exalted Allah is the Lord who has no partners.This Rububiyyah (Lordship) is a type of connection between us and Allah (SWT) that is Allah created us, and nourished us. He is Ar-Rabb (the Nourisher and Cherisher), we can note the story of Prophet Ibraheem (AS), when talking about The Lord of The Worlds Allah (SWT)

الَّذِي خَلَقَنِي فَهُوَ يَهْدِينِ (٧٨)

Who created me, then He has shown me the way: (26:78)

Allah the Exalted created us and guided us to what elevates us in our very lives and souls, Allah The Exalted has opened up to us the doors of thinking and contemplating, the doors of awareness of reality. He informed us of what we require for our facility in this world and in the hereafter. While within our contingent existences He created the Aql (intellect) and gave is intrinsic inclination (fitra). Allah gave us a Heart (Qalb) which opens its perceptions and sensations on the emotional aspects of our lives. And created for us bodily members so that we function in this system and made deeds connected to these things like salah, sawm, hajj. This servitude and worship to Allah (SWT) is always in the benefit of humanity, and not in their disadvantage, as the authentic line of religion is the path to flourishment of the human souls and achievement of felicity and happiness.

What is our Belief about Monotheism in Worship?

Monotheism in worship means that we believe that worship (ibadaat) belongs only to Allah The Exalted, it means we only worship Allah (SWT) and Only Allah deserves to be worshiped. This is of the most important issues related to monotheism and upon it all messengers have called their people toward it.

وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ ۚ وَذَٰلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ (٥)

And they were not enjoined anything except that they should serve Allah, being sincere to Him in obedience, upright, and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate, and that is the right religion. (98:5)

Through adornment of themselves with good moral qualities and the removal of ugly vices, the self purification, and good deeds, and worship, of course, over all these correct beliefs. A person can reach a level where they realize that there is no power except it belongs to Allah and even this person can love only for the sake of and due to Allah The Exalted.

Monotheism in Ownership

Everything really belongs to Allah (SWT) He only gives some kind of metaphorical ownership to creation. This ownership is a test and a blessing. But in the end Allah owns it all.

لِّلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ وَإِن تُبْدُوا مَا فِي أَنفُسِكُمْ أَوْ تُخْفُوهُ يُحَاسِبْكُم بِهِ اللَّهُ ۖ فَيَغْفِرُ لِمَن يَشَاءُ وَيُعَذِّبُ مَن يَشَاءُ ۗ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (٢٨٤)

Whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is Allah's; and whether you manifest what is in your minds or hide it, Allah will call you to account according to it; then He will forgive whom He pleases and chastise whom He pleases, and Allah has power over all things. (2:284)

Monotheism in Authority

There really is no authority except Allah (SWT). Any authority on earth is held accountable in front of Allah for how they used that authority and if they deserved it or had the right in it or not.

إِنَّا أَنزَلْنَا التَّوْرَاةَ فِيهَا هُدًى وَنُورٌ ۚ يَحْكُمُ بِهَا النَّبِيُّونَ الَّذِينَ أَسْلَمُوا لِلَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالرَّبَّانِيُّونَ وَالْأَحْبَارُ بِمَا اسْتُحْفِظُوا مِن كِتَابِ اللَّهِ وَكَانُوا عَلَيْهِ شُهَدَاءَ ۚ فَلَا تَخْشَوُا النَّاسَ وَاخْشَوْنِ وَلَا تَشْتَرُوا بِآيَاتِي ثَمَنًا قَلِيلًا ۚ وَمَن لَّمْ يَحْكُم بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ (٤٤)

Surely We revealed the Taurat in which was guidance and light; with it the prophets who submitted themselves (to Allah) judged (matters) for those who were Jews, and the masters of Divine knowledge and the doctors, because they were required to guard (part) of the Book of Allah, and they were witnesses thereof; therefore fear not the people and

fear Me, and do not take a small price for My communications; and whoever did not judge by what Allah revealed, those are they that are the unbelievers. (5:44)

Worship is only for Allah (SWT)

As mentioned earlier we believe that worship is only for Allah and nothing else deserves to be worshiped. In fact worshiping other than Allah, is polytheism (shirk), and all messengers have called to this belief and reality.

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ (٥)

You alone we worship and You alone we ask for help (1:5)

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا نُوحًا إِلَىٰ قَوْمِهِ فَقَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ إِنِّي أَخَافُ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابَ يَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ (٥٩)

Certainly We sent Nuh to his people, so he said: O my people! serve Allah, you have no god other than Him; surely I fear for you the chastisement of a grievous day. (7:59)

وَإِلَىٰ عَادٍ أَخَاهُمْ هُودًا ۗ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ ۚ أَفَلَا تَتَّقُونَ (٦٥)

And to Ad (We sent) their brother Hud. He said: O my people! serve Allah, you have no god other than Him; will you not then guard? (7:65)

وَإِلَىٰ ثَمُودَ أَخَاهُمْ صَالِحًا ۗ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ ۖ قَدْ جَاءَتْكُم بَيِّنَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ هَٰذِهِ نَاقَةُ اللَّهِ لَكُمْ آيَةً ۖ فَذَرُوهَا تَأْكُلْ فِي أَرْضِ اللَّهِ ۖ وَلَا تَمَسُّوهَا بِسُوءٍ فَيَأْخُذَكُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ (٧٣)

And to Samood (We sent) their brother Salih. He said: O my people! serve Allah, you have no god other than Him; clear proof indeed has come to you from your Lord; this is (as) Allah's she-camel for you-- a sign, therefore leave her alone to pasture on Allah's earth, and do not touch her with any harm, otherwise painful chastisement will overtake you. (7:73)

وَإِلَىٰ مَدْيَنَ أَخَاهُمْ شُعَيْبًا ۗ قَالَ يَا قَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مَا لَكُم مِّنْ إِلَٰهٍ غَيْرُهُ ۖ قَدْ جَاءَتْكُم بَيِّنَةٌ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ فَأَوْفُوا الْكَيْلَ وَالْمِيزَانَ وَلَا تَبْخَسُوا النَّاسَ أَشْيَاءَهُمْ وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ (٨٥)

And to Madyan (We sent) their brother Shu'aib. He said: O my people! serve Allah, you have no god other than Him; clear proof indeed has come to you from your Lord, therefore give full measure and weight and do not diminish to men their things, and do not make mischief in the land after its reform; this is better for you if you are believers: (7:85)

In fact we even repeat this phrase mentioned in surah al Hamd[1] at least ten times a day in our daily obligatory prayers.

Even dua (supplication) is an act of worship according to the teachings of Ahlul Bayt (AS) of course one may send some words and talk to the dead that are not worshiping. But dua is in fact only for Allah (SWT) one should not make dua to creation.

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمُ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ (٦٠)

And your Lord says: Call upon Me, I will answer you; surely those who are too proud for My service shall soon enter hell abased. (40:60)

We find very beautifully mentioned in the Holy Quran, the invitation of Allah to calling (supplicating) to him. Therefore We should call on Allah in all our needs, in all our difficulties, in all our states, we should open our hearts up to Allah (SWT), letting our feelings, love, need, all pour out in sincerity toward Him The Exalted, Who is the Only All Hearer, All Seer and All Knower. All creation depends on and needs Allah The Exalted. We should not be too arrogant to ask Him for our needs, our improvements, and forgiveness.

Another point is that all actions can be made as an act directed toward Allah (SWT) by making our intention of doing that deed to get the Mercy of Allah, to get near to Him, to Obey Him, or out of love for Him (SWT). No matter if those actions are to avoid things or to do them, no matter if obligatory (wajib) or recommended (mustahab), Prohibited (haram) or disliked (makrooh) and any act even marriage, earning livelihood or having children. Therefore any action if accompanied by the intention of referring it to Allah it can be an act of worship in the correct manner such as avoiding a prohibited thing because you know Allah commanded to avoid it, or you want to achieve the Mercy of Allah (SWT) by refraining from it.

What we believe about the angels

[1] Surah Al Fatiha is also called Surah Al Hamd

We believe that the angels are another creation that Allah (SWT) has created, which have been created as intellectual beings without animalistic desires. Some of them Allah may assign task to do certain things, so that they serve him by doing these task.

قُلْ مَن كَانَ عَدُوًّا لِّجِبْرِيلَ فَإِنَّهُ نَزَّلَهُ عَلَىٰ قَلْبِكَ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ (٩٧)

Say: Whoever is the enemy of Jibreel-- for surely he revealed it to your heart by Allah's command, verifying that which is before it and guidance and good news for the believers. (2:97)

وَإِنَّ عَلَيْكُمْ لَحَافِظِينَ (١٠) كِرَامًا كَاتِبِينَ (١١)

And most surely there are keepers over you, Honorable recorders, (82:10-11)

فَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَىٰ عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ يَنَالُهُمْ نَصِيبُهُم مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا يَتَوَفَّوْنَهُمْ قَالُوا أَيْنَ مَا كُنتُمْ تَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ ۖ قَالُوا ضَلُّوا عَنَّا وَشَهِدُوا عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ أَنَّهُمْ كَانُوا كَافِرِينَ (٣٧)

Who is then more unjust than he who forges a lie against Allah or rejects His communications? (As for) those, their portion of the Book shall reach them, until when Our apostles come to them causing them to die, they shall say: Where is that which you used to call upon besides Allah? They would say: They are gone away from us; and they shall bear witness against themselves that they were unbelievers (7:37)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَاءَتْكُمْ جُنُودٌ فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ رِيحًا وَجُنُودًا لَّمْ تَرَوْهَا ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرًا (٩)

O you who believe! call to mind the favor of Allah to you when there came down upon you hosts, so We sent against them a strong wind and hosts, that you saw not, and Allah is Seeing what you do. (33:9)

وَلَمَّا جَاءَتْ رُسُلُنَا لُوطًا سِيءَ بِهِمْ وَضَاقَ بِهِمْ ذَرْعًا وَقَالَ هَٰذَا يَوْمٌ عَصِيبٌ (٧٧)

And when Our apostles came to Lut, he was grieved for them, and he lacked strength to protect them, and said: This is a hard day. (11:77)

These creatures are totally dependent on Allah (SWT) just like other creations, they are contingent beings hence none of this contradicts monotheism.

Rational Values

We believe that the human intellect has been granted the ability to differentiate between goodness (husn) and badness (qubh) in a number of situations. Therefore even before revelation was received mankind has some idea of some basic clear things to them. However not all things have been made clear to the human souls and hence there is the need for hidayah tashriya (legislative guidance), in the sense of the entire revelation. In fact human understanding is restricted and their knowledge is limited. However Prophets and books confirm intellectual directions and enlighten it on what it did not know and upon what it was not able to reach by its self.

Justice of God

We believe that Allah the Exalted is Just and everything He does is Good. Allah would never oppress anyone of his servants and punish them without a reason, and He will not break His Promises. He would never appoint a sinful person as prophets and support them with miracles so that humanity would be misled to evil. He would never leave His servants whom He created to be in blessings and reach to the aim of His Mercy which is indeed the facility. Any imperfect thing is not applicable to Allah as He is Perfect beyond description.

Human Free Will

We believe that Allah the Exalted has created mankind with the ability to choose to do this thing or not. This is called iktiyar (freewill) and warns of punishment for doing wrong and informs us of reward for doing right. Therefore humans actions are attributed to him or her self and hence they are accountable for their deeds.

If Allah predestined all the actions of humans then punishing the sinful for what they did would be meaningless and unjust as they were forced to do such an act.

Reason is such an important source in Islam however revelation (wahi) is higher as it affirms rational propositions and enlightens us on non-relational propositions while intellect and authentic line of religion both reject irrational propositions. Let us consider some noble verses of the Quran that encourage people to think and use their intellects.

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ (١٩٠)

Most surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day there are signs for men who understand. (3:190)

قُلْ هُوَ الْقَادِرُ عَلَىٰ أَن يَبْعَثَ عَلَيْكُمْ عَذَابًا مِّن فَوْقِكُمْ أَوْ مِن تَحْتِ أَرْجُلِكُمْ أَوْ يَلْبِسَكُمْ شِيَعًا وَيُذِيقَ بَعْضَكُم بَأْسَ بَعْضٍ ۗ انظُرْ كَيْفَ نُصَرِّفُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَفْقَهُونَ (٦٥)

Say: He has the power that He should send on you a chastisement from above you or from beneath your feet, or that He should throw you into confusion, (making you) of different parties; and make some of you taste the fighting of others. See how We repeat the communications that they may understand. (6:65)

قُل لَّا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِندِي خَزَائِنُ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنِّي مَلَكٌ ۖ إِنْ أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ ۚ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ ۚ أَفَلَا تَتَفَكَّرُونَ (٥٠)

Say: I do not say to you, I have with me the treasures of Allah, nor do I know the unseen, nor do I say to you that I am an angel; I do not follow aught save that which is revealed to me. Say: Are the blind and the seeing one alike? Do you not then reflect? (6:50)

۞ إِنَّ شَرَّ الدَّوَابِّ عِندَ اللَّهِ الصُّمُّ الْبُكْمُ الَّذِينَ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ (٢٢)

Surely the vilest of animals, in Allah's sight, are the deaf, the dumb, who do not understand. (8:22)

Also we should very importantly considered these verses related to Justice of Allah in the Quran

وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ مُشْفِقِينَ مِمَّا فِيهِ وَيَقُولُونَ يَا وَيْلَتَنَا مَالِ هَٰذَا الْكِتَابِ لَا يُغَادِرُ صَغِيرَةً وَلَا كَبِيرَةً إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا ۚ وَوَجَدُوا مَا عَمِلُوا حَاضِرًا ۗ وَلَا يَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا (٤٩)

And the Book shall be placed, then you will see the guilty fearing from what is in it, and they will say: Ah! woe to us! what a book is this! it does not omit a small one nor a great one, but numbers them (all); and what they had done they shall find present (there); and your Lord does not deal unjustly with anyone. (18:49)

أَلَمْ يَأْتِهِمْ نَبَأُ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ قَوْمِ نُوحٍ وَعَادٍ وَثَمُودَ وَقَوْمِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَأَصْحَابِ مَدْيَنَ وَالْمُؤْتَفِكَاتِ ۚ أَتَتْهُمْ رُسُلُهُم بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ۖ فَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيَظْلِمَهُمْ وَلَٰكِن كَانُوا أَنفُسَهُمْ يَظْلِمُونَ (٧٠)

Has not the news of those before them come to them; of the people of Nuh and Ad and Samood, and the people of Ibrahim and the dwellers of Madyan and the overthrown cities;

their apostles came to them with clear arguments; so it was not Allah Who should do them injustice, but they were unjust to themselves.(9:70)

تِلْكَ آيَاتُ اللَّهِ نَتْلُوهَا عَلَيْكَ بِالْحَقِّ ۗ وَمَا اللَّهُ يُرِيدُ ظُلْمًا لِّلْعَالَمِينَ (١٠٨)

These are the communications of Allah which We recite to you with truth, and Allah does not desire any injustice to the creatures. (3:108)

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ (١٨٦)

And when My servants ask you concerning Me, then surely I am very near; I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me, so they should answer My call and believe in Me that they may walk in the right way. (2:186)

Disasters and Justice

We believe that among the natural disasters that occur in the world, some are a punishment from Allah (SWT), and some are a test for humanity. Only Allah knows fully who deserves what in those events. Also for some people these natural disasters serve as a reminder to wake them up from their deep sleep of heedlessness from Allah The Exalted (Ghalfa) and their real situation.

فَلَمَّا جَاءَ أَمْرُنَا جَعَلْنَا عَالِيَهَا سَافِلَهَا وَأَمْطَرْنَا عَلَيْهَا حِجَارَةً مِّن سِجِّيلٍ مَّنضُودٍ (٨٢)

So when Our decree came to pass, We turned them upside down and rained down upon them stones, of what had been decreed, one after another.(11:82)

فَأَعْرَضُوا فَأَرْسَلْنَا عَلَيْهِمْ سَيْلَ الْعَرِمِ وَبَدَّلْنَاهُم بِجَنَّتَيْهِمْ جَنَّتَيْنِ ذَوَاتَيْ أُكُلٍ خَمْطٍ وَأَثْلٍ وَشَيْءٍ مِّن سِدْرٍ قَلِيلٍ (١٦)

But they turned aside, so We sent upon them a torrent of which the rush could not be withstood, and in place of their two gardens We gave to them two gardens yielding bitter fruit and (growing) tamarisk and a few lote-trees. (34:16)

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُم بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ (٤١)

Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea on account of what the hands of men have wrought, that He may make them taste a part of that which they have done, so that they may return. (30:41)

لَهُ مُعَقِّبَاتٌ مِّن بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ ۗ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ ۗ وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوءًا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ ۚ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِ مِن وَالٍ (١١)

For his sake there are angels following one another, before him and behind him, who guard him by Allah's commandment; surely Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change their own condition; and when Allah intends evil to a people, there is no averting it, and besides Him they have no protector. (13:11)

مَّا أَصَابَكَ مِنْ حَسَنَةٍ فَمِنَ اللَّهِ ۖ وَمَا أَصَابَكَ مِن سَيِّئَةٍ فَمِن نَّفْسِكَ ۚ وَأَرْسَلْنَاكَ لِلنَّاسِ رَسُولًا ۚ وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ شَهِيدًا (٧٩)

Whatever benefit comes to you (O man!), it is from Allah, and whatever misfortune befalls you, it is from yourself, and We have sent you (O Prophet!), to mankind as an apostle; and Allah is sufficient as a witness. (4:79)

2.1 Prophethood (Nubuwwah)

What is our belief about messengers of God?

We believe that Allah the Exalted has sent many prophets so that mankind is guided. This falls under the classification of hidayat at-tashriyyah (legislative guidance). If there was no sending of prophets and prophetic missions, that is if Allah did not inform the people then mankind would not be able to reach Mercy of Allah though use of iktiyar (freewill) which is in line with the purpose of human creation, and if such guidance was not offered to the people then the people would certainly go astray and deviate from the right way.

Lastly one of the most important points is that if Allah (SWT) did not send messengers and prophets and books then mankind would not have a complete evidence on them hence by doing so mankind has then no excuse to claim on the day of judgment and any deviance after they knew is upon mankind's own shoulders.

رُّسُلًا مُّبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا (١٦٥)

(We sent) apostles as the givers of good news and as warners, so that people should not have a plea against Allah after the (coming of) apostles; and Allah is Mighty, Wise. (4:165)

After sending warnings and giving glad tidings there is no more excuse left for mankind if they reject correct beliefs, obedience, and submission to Allah the Exalted. That is mankind would have no plea nor argument on the day of judgment in regards to not knowing that Allah is the Only God, and that Allah has commanded us to do somethings and to refrain from some other things. Certainly then the sending of messengers, prophets and books is both in line with human needs and The Wisdom and The Mercy of Allah the Exalted.

Ulul Al-Azm

We believe that out of the many prophets that Allah (SWT) has sent to humanity, there were five very special messengers which are titled as possessors of determination (ulul al azm), these messengers brought a new book, they brought a new shari'a. The first of them is Prophet Noah (Nuh), the second is Prophet Abraham (Ibraheem), the third is Prophet Moses (Musa), The fourth is Prophet Jesus (Esa) (AS) and the fifth is Prophet Muhammad (SAWA).

وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِيثَاقَهُمْ وَمِنكَ وَمِن نُّوحٍ وَإِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ ۖ وَأَخَذْنَا مِنْهُم مِّيثَاقًا غَلِيظًا (٧)

And when We made a covenant with the prophets and with you, and with Nuh and Ibrahim and Musa and Isa, son of Marium, and We made with them a strong covenant (33:7)

فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُو الْعَزْمِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ وَلَا تَسْتَعْجِل لَّهُمْ ۚ كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَ مَا يُوعَدُونَ لَمْ يَلْبَثُوا إِلَّا سَاعَةً مِّن نَّهَارٍ ۚ بَلَاغٌ ۚ فَهَلْ يُهْلَكُ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ (٣٥)

Therefore bear up patiently as did the apostles endowed with constancy bear up with patience and do not seek to hasten for them (their doom). On the day that they shall see what they are promised they shall be as if they had not tarried save an hour of the day. A sufficient exposition! Shall then any be destroyed save the transgressing people?(46:35)

As you may notice this above ayat (verse) of the Holy Quran uses the word "ulul al-azm" for such prophets.

Khatam An-Nabi

We believe that our Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) is the seal of the prophets, hence he is the last prophet and the religion with which he was sent will remain until the day of judgment. In fact Islam is a comprehensive way of life, it offers the correct beliefs and teachings as well as laws for humanities, felicity and happiness. Islam also affirms the authentic messages sent to Prophets Mosses (AS) and Prophet Jesus (AS)

مَّا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا (٤٠)

Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Apostle of Allah and the Last of the prophets; and Allah is cognizant of all things. (33:40)

Infallibility of the Prophets

We believe that all the prophets that Allah sent were sinless (masoom) because if they made a sin then people would have been pushed away from trusting their message. In other words people would not be able to trust a sinful person. Also if one followed the sinful in his sin they would end up disobeying Allah which is contradicting the very purpose of the entire prophetic mission itself, which was for the guidance of humanity.

Therefore when we arrive at some Quranic Ayat (verses) that seem to imply some sort of sin performed by the prophets, we interpret them as leaving the best option for a lesser good option yet not actually a sin. This is what we call “tark al-awwal”

Prophets: Submissive Servants of God

We believe that the prophets were servants of Allah (SWT) and being a servant of Allah is one of the greatest positions as they are in complete submission to the Exalted Master of all creation. Such a position is so important that we can find reminders of it twice in every obligatory daily prayer while reciting the mandatory “tashahud” where we say after affirming our belief in Allah as the Only God, “we bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and His Messenger.” Also we believe that never did a prophet claim to be God. And not a single one of them ever invited people to worship him instead of Allah (SWT)

مَا كَانَ لِبَشَرٍ أَن يُؤْتِيَهُ اللَّهُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ ثُمَّ يَقُولَ لِلنَّاسِ كُونُوا عِبَادًا لِّي مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلَٰكِن كُونُوا رَبَّانِيِّينَ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تُعَلِّمُونَ الْكِتَابَ وَبِمَا كُنتُمْ تَدْرُسُونَ (٧٩)

It is not meant for a mortal that Allah should give him the Book and the wisdom and prophethood, then he should say to men: Be my servants rather than Allah's; but rather (he would say): Be worshippers of the Lord because of your teaching the Book and your reading (3:79)

لَّن يَسْتَنكِفَ الْمَسِيحُ أَن يَكُونَ عَبْدًا لِّلَّهِ وَلَا الْمَلَائِكَةُ الْمُقَرَّبُونَ ۚ وَمَن يَسْتَنكِفْ عَنْ عِبَادَتِهِ وَيَسْتَكْبِرْ فَسَيَحْشُرُهُمْ إِلَيْهِ جَمِيعًا (١٧٢)

The Messiah does by no means disdain that he should be a servant of Allah, nor do the angels who are near to Him, and whoever disdains His service and is proud, He will gather them all together to Himself. (4:172)

Hence we do not believe the idea of trinity nor duality such a belief was not in the authentic teachings of Prophet Jesus and actually it became popular afterwards as a type of exaggeration (ghuluww) amongst christian history.

2.2 Prophets Part 2

Knowing the Unseen things

The fact of being a servant of Allah the Exalted is not contradicting the idea of Allah allowing them to know something of the unseen things in the past, present or future with His (SWT) permission. That is meaning that Allah (SWT) gives the prophets special insight and knowledge to the extent required for their prophetic missions and up to the extent which Allah (SWT) wills.

In fact the Quranic direction clearly makes it clear that Allah (SWT) is the Only All Knower of everything.

عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا (٢٦) إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ مِن رَّسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُ يَسْلُكُ مِن بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ رَصَدًا (٢٧)

The Knower of the unseen! so He does not reveal His secrets to any, Except to him whom He chooses as an apostle; for surely He makes a guard to march before him and after him, (72:26-27)

At the same time the Quranic direction points us to the humanness of His Prophets (AS), and their dependency on Him The Exalted Allah (SWT), their servitude to Him and hence enabling them as real human role models who are given a real status by Allah (SWT).

قُل لَّا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِندِي خَزَائِنُ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنِّي مَلَكٌ ۖ إِنْ أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ ۚ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ ۚ أَفَلَا (٥٠) تَتَفَكَّرُونَ

Say: I do not say to you, I have with me the treasures of Allah, nor do I know the unseen, nor do I say to you that I am an angel; I do not follow aught save that which is revealed to me. Say: Are the blind and the seeing one alike? Do you not then reflect? (6:50)

قُل لَّا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ ۚ وَلَوْ كُنتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ لَاسْتَكْثَرْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ السُّوءُ ۚ إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

Say, ‘I have no control over any benefit for myself, nor [over] any harm except what Allah may wish. Had I known the Unseen, I would have acquired much good, and no ill would have befallen me. I am only a warner and bearer of good news to a people who have faith.’ (7:188)

In fact Allah The Exalted informs us in The Quranic revelation that the Prophet’s (AS) were given knowledge of some unseen things, which others did not know.

As regards Prophet Jesus (AS) we find he was allowed to inform people about what they hide.

وَرَسُولًا إِلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنِّي قَدْ جِئْتُكُم بِآيَةٍ مِّن رَّبِّكُمْ ۖ أَنِّي أَخْلُقُ لَكُم مِّنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَأَنفُخُ فِيهِ فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۖ وَأُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ ۖ وَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا تَأْكُلُونَ وَمَا تَدَّخِرُونَ فِي بُيُوتِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُم مُّؤْمِنِينَ (٤٩)

And (make him) an apostle to the children of Israel: That I have come to you with a sign from your Lord, that I determine for you out of dust like the form of a bird, then I breathe into it and it becomes a bird with Allah's permission and I heal the blind and the leprous, and bring the dead to life with Allah's permission and I inform you of what you should eat

and what you should store in your houses; most surely there is a sign in this for you, if you are believers. (3:49)

We also find mentioned in Surah Yusuf,

ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ أَنبَاءِ الْغَيْبِ نُوحِيهِ إِلَيْكَ ۖ وَمَا كُنتَ لَدَيْهِمْ إِذْ أَجْمَعُوا أَمْرَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَمْكُرُونَ (١٠٢)

This is of the announcements relating to the unseen (which) We reveal to you, and you were not with them when they resolved upon their affair, and they were devising plans. (12:102)

When we arrive at the narrations (ahadith) we also can cite from Sermon 128 of Nahjul Balagha[2] an explanation of ilmul ghayb which states"

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[2] Sermon 128: O Ahnaf!....
About important future events in Basrah
ومن كلام له (عليه السلام)

وهو ممّا كان يخبر به عن الملاحم بالبصرة

O Ahnaf! It is as though I see him advancing with an army which has neither dust nor noise, nor rustling of reins, nor neighing of horses. They are trampling the ground with their feet as if they are the feet of ostriches.

يَا أَحْنَفُ، كَأَنِّي بِهِ وَقَدْ سَارَ بِالْجَيْشِ الَّذِي لاَ يَكُونُ لَهُ غُبَارٌ وَلاَ لَجَبٌ، وَلاَ قَعْقَعَةُ لُجُم، وَلاَ حَمْحَمَةُ خَيْل، يُثِيرُونَ الأَرْضَ بِأَقْدَامِهِمْ كَأَنَّهَا أَقْدَامُ النَّعَامِ.

As-Sayyid ar-Radi says: Amir al-mu'minin pointed to the Chief of the Negroes, (Sahibu'z-Zanj).1

يومىء بذلك (عليه السلام) إلى صاحب الزّنْج.

Then Amir al -mu'minin said:

Woe to you (the people of Basrah's) inhabited streets and decorated houses which possess wings like the wings of vultures and trunks like the trunks of elephants; they are the people from among whom if one is killed he is not mourned and if one is lost he is not searched for. I turn this world over on its face, value it only according to its (low) value, and look at it with an eye suitable to it.

ثمّ قال (عليه السلام): وَيْلٌ لِسِكَكِكُمُ الْعَامِرَةِ، وَدُورِكُمُ الْمُزَخْرَفَةِ الَّتِي لَهَا أَجْنِحَةٌ كَأَجْنَحَةِ النُّسُورِ، وَخَرَاطِيمُ كَخَرَاطِيمِ الْفِيَلَةِ، مِنْ أُولئِكَ الَّذِينَ لاَ يُنْدَبُ قَتِيلُهُمْ، وَلاَ يُفْقَدُ غَائِبُهُمْ. أَنَا كَابُّ الدُّنْيَا لِوَجْهِهَا، وَقَادِرُهَا بِقَدْرِهَا، وَنَاظِرُهَا بِعَيْنِهَا.

A part of the same sermon referring to the Turks (Mongols)
منه: ويومئ به إلى وصف الاتراك

I 2 can see a people whose faces are like shields covered with rough-scraped skins. They dress themselves in silken and woollen clothes and hold dear excellent horses. Their killing and bloodshed shall take place freely till the wounded shall walk over the dead and the number of runners-away shall be less than those taken prisoner:

“One of his companions said to him: O Amir al-mu'minin, you have been given knowledge of hidden things. Whereupon Amir al-mu'minin laughed and said to the man who belonged to the tribe of Banu Kalb:

فقال له بعض أصحابه: لقد أَعطيت يا أميرالمؤمنين علم الغيب! فضحك)عليه السلام(، وقال للرجل وكان كلبياً :
يَا أَخَا كَلْب، لَيْسَ هُوَ بِعِلْمِ غَيْب، وَ إِنَّمَا هُوَ تَعَلُّمٌ مِنْ ذِي عِلْم، وَ إِنَّمَا عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ، وَمَا عَدَّدَهُاللهُسُبْحَانَهُ بِقَوْلِهِ:) إِنَّ

كَأَنِّي أَرَاهُمْ قَوْماً كَأَنَّ وُجُوهَهُمُ الْمَجَانُّ الْمُطَرَّقَةُ، يَلْبَسُونَ السَّرَقَ وَالدِّيبَاجَ، وَيَعْتَقِبُونَ الْخَيْلَ الْعِتَاقَ، وَيَكُونُ هُنَاكَ اسْتِحْرَارُ قَتْل،حَتَّى يَمْشِيَ الْمَجْرُوحُ عَلَى الْمَقْتُولِ، وَيَكُونَ الْمُفْلِتُ أَقَلَّ مِنَ الْمَأْسُورِ!

One of his companions said to him: O Amir al-mu'minin, you have been given knowledge of hidden things. Whereupon Amir al-mu'minin laughed and said to the man who belonged to the tribe of Banu Kalb:

: فقال له بعض أصحابه: لقد أَعطيت يا أميرالمؤمنين علم الغيب! فضحك (عليه السلام)، وقال للرجل ـ وكان كلبياً ـ

O brother of Kalb! This is not knowledge of hidden things (‘ilmu'l-ghayb), 3 these matters have been acquired from him (namely in Prophet) who knew them. As regard knowledge of hidden things, that means knowledge of the Day of Judgement, and the things covered by Allah in the verse:

“Verily, Allah is He with Whom is the knowledge of the Hour; He sends down the rain, and He knows what is in the wombs. No soul knows what it will earn tomorrow, and no soul knows in what land it will die..” (Qur'an, 31:34)

Therefore, Allah alone knows what is there in the wombs, whether male or female, ugly or handsome, generous or miserly, mischievous or pious, and who will be the fuel for Hell and who will be in the company of the Prophets in Paradise. This is the knowledge of the hidden things which is not known to anyone save Allah. All else is that whose knowledge Allah passed on to His Prophet and he passed it on to me, and prayed for me that my bosom may retain it and my ribs may hold it.

يَا أَخَا كَلْب، لَيْسَ هُوَ بِعِلْمِ غَيْب، وَإِنَّمَا هُوَ تَعَلُّمٌ مِنْ ذِي عِلْم، وَإِنَّمَا عِلْمُ الْغَيْبِ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ، وَمَا عَدَّدَهُ اللهُ سُبْحَانَهُ بِقَوْلِهِ: (إِنَّ اللهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَ يُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثَ، وَ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الأَرْحَامِ، وَ لاتَدْرِى نَفْسٌ ماذا تَكْسِبُ غَداً، وَ ما تَدْرِى نَفْسٌ بِأَىِّ اَرْضٍ تَموتُ..).الاية. فَيَعْلَمُ سُبْحَانَهُ مَا فِي الأَرْحَامِ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنْثَى، وَقَبِيحٍ أَوْ جَمِيلٍ، وَسَخِيٍّ أَوْ بَخِيلٍ، وَشَقِيٍّ أَوْ سَعِيدٍ، وَمَنْ يَكُونُ فِي النَّارِ حَطَباً، أَوْ فِي الْجِنَانِ لِلنَّبِيِّينَ مُرَافِقاً: فَهذَا عَلَمُ الْغَيْبِ الَّذِي لاَ يَعْلَمُهُ أَحَدٌ إِلاَّ اللهُ، وَمَا سِوَى ذلِكَ فَعِلْمٌ عَلَّمَهُ اللهُ نَبِيَّهُ (صلى الله عليه وآله) فَعَلَّمَنِيهِ، وَدَعَا لِي بِأَنْ يَعِيَهُ صَدْرِي، وَتَضْطَمَّ عَلَيْهِ جَوَانِحِي.

Alternative Sources for Sermon 128
(1) Al-Tabari, Ta'rikh, VI, 48;

(2) Ibn al-'Athir, al-Nihayah, (b.j.r);

(3) al-Saduq, al-'Amali;

(4) al-'Amidi, Ghurar, 329;

(5) al-Karajiki, Ma’dan, 226;

(6) al-Bayhaqi, al-Mahasin, 41;

(7) al-Jahiz, al-Hayawan, II, 90

اللهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَ يُنَزِّلُ الْغَيْثُ، وَ يَعْلَمُ ما فِي الأَرْحامِ، وَ لاتَدْرى نَفْسٌ ماذا تَكْسِبُ غَداً، وَ ما تَدْرى نَفْسٌ بِاَىِّ اَرْض تَموتُ..(.الاية. فَيَعْلَمُ سُبْحَانَهُ مَا فِي الأَرْحَامِ مِنْ ذَكَر أَوْ أُنْثَى، وَقَبِيح أَوْ جَمِيل، وَسَخِيٍّ أَوْ بَخِيل، وَشَقِيّ أَوْ سَعِيد، وَمَنْ يَكُونُ فِي النَّارِ حَطَباً، أَوْ فِي الْجِنَانِ لِلنَّبِيِّينَ مُرَافِقاً; فَهذَا عَلْمُ الْغَيْبِ الَّذِي لاَ يَعْلَمُهُ أَحَدٌ إِلاَّاللهُ، وَمَا سِوَى ذلِكَ فَعِلْمٌ عَلَّمَهُاللهُ نَبِيَّهُ)صلى الله عليه وآله(فَعَلَّمَنِيهِ، وَدَعَا لِي بِ أَنْ يَعِيَهُ صَدْرِي، وَتَضْطَمَّ عَلَيْهِ جَوَانِحِي."

“O brother of Kalb! This is not knowledge of hidden things (‘ilmu'l-ghayb), these matters have been acquired from him who knew them. As regard knowledge of hidden things, that means knowledge of the Day of Judgement, and the things covered by Allah in the verse:
“Verily, Allah is He with Whom is the knowledge of the Hour; He sends down the rain, and He knows what is in the wombs. No soul knows what it will earn tomorrow, and no soul knows in what land it will die..” (Qur'an, 31:34)

Therefore, Allah alone knows what is there in the wombs, whether male or female, ugly or handsome, generous or miserly, mischievous or pious, and who will be the fuel for Hell and who will be in the company of the Prophets in Paradise. This is the knowledge of the hidden things which is not known to anyone save Allah. All else is that whose knowledge Allah passed on to His Prophet and he passed it on to me, and prayed for me that my bosom may retain it and my ribs may hold it.”

Besides this we can also mention some of the formative scholars and their views about the Prophets (AS) knowing everything like Sayyid Muratada (RA) he was once asked if the prophet (SAWA) was good at writing and reading books or not he stated both are possible hence showing he did not believe they knew everything. (The Letters of Al-Sharif Al-Murtada, vol. 1, p. 104)

Shaykh Toosi (RA) “for their saying that he must be knowledgeable of all information and the unseen, there is no doubt in its invalidity, because it is known That all of this is not related to him in the chapter of religion, and the imam is not a ruler in any of that, so how is it necessary for the imam to judge something in which he is neither an imam nor a ruler?”

Shaykh Mufeed (RA) “It is not a condition of the prophets (peace be upon him) that they encompass every knowledge, nor that they stand on the innermost of every apparent, and our Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was the best of the prophets and the most knowledgeable of the messengers, and he was not encompassed by the science of the stars, nor was he was exposed to that, and poetry did not come from him and he should not. He was illiterate in the text of the revelation, and he did not deal with knowledge of trades, …he hired a guide on the ways of the road, and he would ask about news and conceal from him what was not brought to him by honest people.”

Therefore Prophets can indeed know and are aware of whatever Allah (SWT) reveals to them or allows them to know of anything hidden or not about this world, or another world and can inform people about them with His (SWT) permission but NO one knows everything except Allah (SWT).

قُل لَّا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ عِندِي خَزَائِنُ اللَّهِ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ وَلَا أَقُولُ لَكُمْ إِنِّي مَلَكٌ ۖ إِنْ أَتَّبِعُ إِلَّا مَا يُوحَىٰ إِلَيَّ ۚ قُلْ هَلْ يَسْتَوِي الْأَعْمَىٰ وَالْبَصِيرُ ۚ أَفَلَا تَتَفَكَّرُونَ (٥٠)

"Say: I do not say to you, I have with me the treasures of Allah, nor do I know the unseen, nor do I say to you that I am an angel; I do not follow aught save that which is revealed to me. Say: Are the blind and the seeing one alike? Do you not then reflect?" (6:50)

Commentary: In fact an argument we can put forward against those who claim that the prophet or the imams have all knowledge, is that such a claim would shake the very foundations of Asma (Infallibility) because we say that infallibility is required because if a prophet sinned people would not trust him in concerns to what he brings, hence since the prophet is told to speak the way mentioned in the verses of Quran, and that being not true of his real state would cause distrust to the prophetic revelation as it is because it would be a lie, to say otherwise. And people would then distrust him, hence Asma disproves such claims.

Use of a Means (Tawwasul)

The term tawwasul means the use of a means to reach what is with Allah (SWT), things like salaah or one's good deeds can be a tawwasul. However there are some people that hold views which are behind certain people's ideas of tawwasul as per its application and usage, which I do not agree with, what we suggest here is the usage of phrases like salawat and the phrase Bihaqqi Muhammad wa Alihi (by the right of Muhammad and his family) when doing supplications (dua) which are both found in our resources. By this way we can add something to our supplications and ask Allah The Exalted and add a means to seek His acceptance of it. This approach is totally directed toward Allah (SWT) as He is the only real helper.

We also believe that the Prophets and Imams are dependent creatures of Allah (SWT) not independent from Allah (SWT). Hence we do not worship them, Allah is the only one who deserves worship, and worshiping other than Him is polytheism or disbelief. We do not believe Allah has partners, we reject trinity, and partnerships in all forms, and even in regards to God having parts. We believe all creation which includes the prophets and imams need Allah and the Prophets and the Imams rely on Allah to which without his permission they would not have anything, they have no control over harm or benefit

themselves. And we do not worship the Prophets rather they only act within his program and do as they are commanded.

قُل لَّا أَمْلِكُ لِنَفْسِي نَفْعًا وَلَا ضَرًّا إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ ۚ وَلَوْ كُنتُ أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ لَاسْتَكْثَرْتُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَمَا مَسَّنِيَ السُّوءُ ۚ إِنْ أَنَا إِلَّا نَذِيرٌ وَبَشِيرٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ (١٨٨)

Say: I do not control any benefit or harm for my own soul except as Allah please; and had I known the unseen I would have had much of good and no evil would have touched me; I am nothing but a warner and the giver of good news to a people who believe. (7:188)

2.3 Prophets Part 3

The Religion

The aim of the prophetic missions throughout the ages is following the same aim, which is generally the guidance of humanity to the correct way, to recognition of Allah (SWT) and felicity by believing in Allah (SWT), the resurrection day, and doing good deeds. Hence within the religious way of life is acquiring a religious education and affirming and adorning oneself with beautiful moral qualities.

As the prophetic mission began the shari'a rules were more basic and sometimes Allah (SWT) changed some laws to test people or including, possibly also for other reasons. But the fundamental beliefs such as tawheed (uniqueness of God) and the resurrection day, has not been changed, rather these are things affirmed to by our intrinsic nature and intellectual capacities, however at times people's ability to understand these things differs but the message has always been: worship Allah, The Only God, and there will be a day of accountability. This overall message and prophetic mission reached a level where it was completed and sealed hence we believe that Islam is the final and last and most complete message.

...الْيَوْمَ يَئِسَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِن دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنِ ۚ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا ۚ...

This day have those who disbelieve despaired of your religion, so fear them not, and fear Me. This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as a religion; (5:3)

Actually according to the history this very important day mentioned in the noble verse of The Holy Quran was revealed approximate around three months before the death of the Noble Prophet (SAWA), after the Hajjatul Wida (Farewell Pilgrimage)[3] when the Prophet was on his way back to Madina, and he stopped at a place called Ghader Khum where he announced “Whosoever I am master this Ali is his Master” hence we believe that the successorship is an appointment from Allah (SAWA).

Past Messages

We believe that the coming of Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) was told to people by past prophets, even it is said as reason historically for the migration of some of the jews to the area of Hijaz, was because they were aware a prophet was coming in these areas.

الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَ الرَّسُولَ النَّبِيَّ الْأُمِّيَّ الَّذِي يَجِدُونَهُ مَكْتُوبًا عِندَهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَاةِ وَالْإِنجِيلِ يَأْمُرُهُم بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَاهُمْ عَنِ الْمُنكَرِ وَيُحِلُّ لَهُمُ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَيُحَرِّمُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْخَبَائِثَ وَيَضَعُ عَنْهُمْ إِصْرَهُمْ وَالْأَغْلَالَ الَّتِي كَانَتْ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ فَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِهِ وَعَزَّرُوهُ وَنَصَرُوهُ وَاتَّبَعُوا النُّورَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ مَعَهُ ۙ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ (١٥٧)

Those who follow the Apostle-Prophet, the Ummi, whom they find written down with them in the Taurat and the Injeel (who) enjoins on them good and forbids them evil, and makes lawful to them the good things and makes unlawful to them impure things, and removes from them their burden and the shackles which were upon them; so (as for) those who believe in him and honor him and help him, and follow the light which has been sent down with him, these it is that are the successful. (7:157)

نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ وَأَنزَلَ التَّوْرَاةَ وَالْإِنجِيلَ (٣)

He has revealed to you the Book with truth, verifying that which is before it, and He revealed the Tavrat and the Injeel aforetime, a guidance for the people, and He sent the Furqan. (3:3)

We also affirm and believe in the sending of Prophets (AS), and Books such as The Torah, The Zabur (psalms) and The Injil. Discussions are held here on if change has occurred or what has been lost etc. regardless we affirm that there are many things we agree with in the current circulating books of ahlul kitab.

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[3] This title for the farewell hajj was given later.

Racism

We believe that our Prophet rejected racism hence prophets viewed all races and languages and nations as respectable.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ (١٣)

O you men! surely We have created you of a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other; surely the most honorable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty); surely Allah is Knowing, Aware. (49:13)

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَأَلْوَانِكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالِمِينَ (٢٢)

And one of His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your tongues and colors; most surely there are signs in this for the learned. (30:22)

Innate Human Nature (Fitra)

In fact the belief in Allah (SWT) is embedded in our intrinsic nature, this inclination toward Allah (SWT) is something Prophets (AS) were cultivators and gardeners to these special inclinations of fitra, hence they would tell people things that would remove the infestations of polytheism from human souls and uncover the bright light of fitra.

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا ۚ فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ (٣٠)

Then set your face upright for religion in the right state-- the nature made by Allah in which He has made men; there is no altering of Allah's creation; that is the right religion, but most people do not know-- (30:30)

Divine Books

Allah The Exalted has sent several divine books for the guidance of humanity, among them we can mention the Suhoof of Ibraheem, Suhoof of Nuh, The Tawrat (Torah) to Prophet Musa (AS) and the Injil to Prophet Esa (AS). however since the mission was completed with the prophetic mission of the Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) the last and most preserved of them is the Holy Quran.

إِنَّ هَٰذَا لَفِي الصُّحُفِ الْأُولَىٰ (١٨) صُحُفِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَمُوسَىٰ (١٩)

Most surely this is in the earlier scriptures, The scriptures of Ibrahim and Musa. (87:18-19)

If these books had not been sent the human beings could be easily deceived and deviate away from the truth, and would not reach pinnacles of piety and morality and belief. Also the social and domestic laws that the religion lays out solve many of the problems humans face in their daily lives. All of which is inline with the purpose of human creation which is to obtain the Mercy of God.

آمَنَ الرَّسُولُ بِمَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْهِ مِن رَّبِّهِ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۚ كُلٌّ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ لَا نُفَرِّقُ بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِّن رُّسُلِهِ ۚ وَقَالُوا سَمِعْنَا وَأَطَعْنَا ۖ غُفْرَانَكَ رَبَّنَا وَإِلَيْكَ الْمَصِيرُ (٢٨٥)

The apostle believes in what has been revealed to him from his Lord, and (so do) the believers; they all believe in Allah and His angels and His books and His apostles; We make no difference between any of His apostles; and they say: We hear and obey, our Lord! Thy forgiveness (do we crave), and to Thee is the eventual course. (2:285)

However as the ages moved forward on the line of time, and the months passed, and the generations had been passing away and new ones born, some of these books or the messages they imparted were either changed, lost and/or mixed up with incorrect and false beliefs. However the Holy Quran is preserved from such alteration (tahreef) and problems therefore The Holy Quran remains a living miracle unchanged to illuminate the hearts, minds, souls, societies and histories of mankind.

يَا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولُنَا يُبَيِّنُ لَكُمْ كَثِيرًا مِّمَّا كُنتُمْ تُخْفُونَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ وَيَعْفُو عَن كَثِيرٍ ۚ قَدْ جَاءَكُم مِّنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُّبِينٌ
يَهْدِي بِهِ اللَّهُ مَنِ اتَّبَعَ رِضْوَانَهُ سُبُلَ السَّلَامِ وَيُخْرِجُهُم مِّنَ الظُّلُمَاتِ إِلَى النُّورِ بِإِذْنِهِ وَيَهْدِيهِمْ إِلَىٰ صِرَاطٍ مُّسْتَقِيمٍ

O followers of the Book! Indeed Our Apostle has come to you making clear to you much of what you concealed of the Book and passing over much; indeed, there has come to you light and a clear Book from Allah; With it Allah guides him who will follow His pleasure into the ways of safety and brings them out of utter darkness into light by His will and guides them to the right path. (5:15-16)

3.1 The Quran

The Quran - Part 1

Quran: The Everlasting Miracle

The Holy Quran is not just miraculous when we consider its eloquence, fluency or any other literary aspect rather the Holy Quran has an overall miraculous aspect to it in relation to its meanings and education and insight. This topic will be brought here briefly as the Quran is a miracle currently in our hands or in our access that proves the Prophethood of our Prophet Muhammad (SAWA). However the topics related to the Quran have their own branches of studies found in what is called “Uloom al Quran” (the science of the Quran), is where much depth can be entered into various topics ranging from the history of Quran, to its Ijaz (miraculousness).

Therefore we believe that no human or any other creation can come up with a similar book, even a similar chapter of the Quran, this in fact was a challenge set forth in the Holy Quran itself.

قُل لَّئِنِ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْإِنسُ وَالْجِنُّ عَلَىٰ أَن يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنِ لَا يَأْتُونَ بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا (٨٨)

Say: If men and jinn should combine together to bring the like of this Quran, they could not bring the like of it, though some of them were aiders of others. (17:88)

وَإِن كُنتُمْ فِي رَيْبٍ مِّمَّا نَزَّلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا فَأْتُوا بِسُورَةٍ مِّن مِّثْلِهِ وَادْعُوا شُهَدَاءَكُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ (٢٣)

And if you are in doubt as to that which We have revealed to Our servant, then produce a chapter like it and call on your witnesses besides Allah if you are truthful. (2:23)

Tahreef

We also believe that this Quran is immune from distortions in the sense of a verse being deleted from it or added to it by people. The Quran that is in the access of people currently is the same word by word as the Quran that was revealed to the Prophet (SAWA), with nothing added to it and nothing omitted from it.

In fact the early muslims had given the Holy Quran very much importances, some would be memorizing it, scribes would be writing down its verses, and the Prophet (SAWA) had scribes of revelation to whom he dictated what Allah (SWT) revealed and they wrote it down. Allah (SWT) had guaranteed the protection of the Quran therefore we do not believe distortion as in the sense of omission of a word, an ayat, a surah or addition of any of them as possible.

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ (٩)

Surely We have revealed the Reminder and We will most surely be its guardian. (15:9)

The majority of both sunni and shia have also believed that the Quran has not had such tahreef (alteration) occur to it, however some small groups from both sides historically had made the claim that it occurred. Here if we do find a reliable hadith about such a thing we must first see if it can be interpreted as meaning interpretations or misinterpretations of Quran, or small differences in manner of recitation. However if we do find a hadith then we may argue that contradicts the Quran we would not accept that hadith, that said we must first prove the hadith to be reliable and then see if we can reconcile it unless it very clearly opposes the Quran.

وَالَّذِينَ اجْتَنَبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ أَن يَعْبُدُوهَا وَأَنَابُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَىٰ ۚ فَبَشِّرْ عِبَادِ (١٧) الَّذِينَ يَسْتَمِعُونَ الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ الَّذِينَ هَدَاهُمُ اللَّهُ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمْ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ (١٨)

And (as for) those who keep off from the worship of the idols and turn to Allah, they shall have good news, therefore give good news to My servants, Those who listen to the word, then follow the best of it; those are they whom Allah has guided, and those it is who are the men of understanding. (39:17-18)

Reciting The Quran

Recitation of The Holy Quran can become a beautiful act of the remembrance of Allah, and worship, and it should lead to thinking and pondering about the Quranic directions. Hence thinking upon the Quran, following the guidance Allah (SWT) sent down, and applying it in our lives, not making the Quran a dusty book that we forget about and don't understand it’s importance are very important to our spiritual and worldly lives..

إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ أَنَّكَ تَقُومُ أَدْنَىٰ مِن ثُلُثَيِ اللَّيْلِ وَنِصْفَهُ وَثُلُثَهُ وَطَائِفَةٌ مِّنَ الَّذِينَ مَعَكَ ۚ وَاللَّهُ يُقَدِّرُ اللَّيْلَ وَالنَّهَارَ ۚ عَلِمَ أَن لَّن تُحْصُوهُ فَتَابَ عَلَيْكُمْ ۖ فَاقْرَءُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ ۚ عَلِمَ أَن سَيَكُونُ مِنكُم مَّرْضَىٰ ۙ وَآخَرُونَ يَضْرِبُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَبْتَغُونَ مِن فَضْلِ اللَّهِ ۙ وَآخَرُونَ يُقَاتِلُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ ۖ فَاقْرَءُوا مَا تَيَسَّرَ مِنْهُ ۚ وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَقْرِضُوا اللَّهَ قَرْضًا حَسَنًا ۚ وَمَا تُقَدِّمُوا لِأَنفُسِكُم مِّنْ خَيْرٍ تَجِدُوهُ عِندَ اللَّهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا وَأَعْظَمَ أَجْرًا ۚ وَاسْتَغْفِرُوا اللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ (٢٠)

Surely your Lord knows that you pass in prayer nearly two-thirds of the night, and (sometimes) half of it, and (sometimes) a third of it, and (also) a party of those with you; and Allah measures the night and the day. He knows that you are not able to do it, so He has turned to you (mercifully), therefore read what is easy of the Quran. He knows that there must be among you sick, and others who travel in the land seeking of the bounty of Allah, and others who fight in Allah's way, therefore read as much of it as is easy (to you), and keep up prayer and pay the poor-rate and offer to Allah a goodly gift, and whatever of good you send on beforehand for yourselves, you will find it with Allah; that is best and greatest in reward; and ask forgiveness of Allah; surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful. (73:20)

أَفَلَا يَتَدَبَّرُونَ الْقُرْآنَ أَمْ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبٍ أَقْفَالُهَا (٢٤)

Do they not then reflect on the Quran? Nay, on the hearts there are locks. (47:24)

وَهَٰذَا كِتَابٌ أَنزَلْنَاهُ مُبَارَكٌ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ وَاتَّقُوا لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ (١٥٥)

And this is a Book We have revealed, blessed; therefore follow it and guard (against evil) that mercy may be shown to you. (6:155)

Interpreting Quran

The words of the Holy Quran should be understood in their literal and apparent meanings, unless we have a clue of context to indicate to us that its usage is metaphorical. As example:

وَمَن كَانَ فِي هَٰذِهِ أَعْمَىٰ فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَىٰ وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا (٧٢)

And whoever is blind in this, he shall (also) be blind in the hereafter; and more erring from the way. (17:72)

Blindness here is not blindness of the eyes, a person who cannot see with his or her physical eyes can be a very pious and a God fearing person. Rather the meaning that we find mentioned in tafseer of this ayat is blindness to the truth, that is an internal blindness.

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الَّذِي يَنْعِقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءً وَنِدَاءً ۚ صُمٌّ بُكْمٌ عُمْيٌ فَهُمْ لَا يَعْقِلُونَ (١٧١)

And the parable of those who disbelieve is as the parable of one who calls out to that which hears no more than a call and a cry; deaf, dumb (and) blind, so they do not understand. (2:171)

Here what is used are clues of context, called Qareena to tell us that the meaning was not the literal definition. Similarly when we see verses that discuss Allah the Exalted as having body parts which of course we believe He is too lofty for that, we view those as metaphorical usages.

وَقَالَتِ الْيَهُودُ يَدُ اللَّهِ مَغْلُولَةٌ ۚ غُلَّتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَلُعِنُوا بِمَا قَالُوا ۘ بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ يُنفِقُ كَيْفَ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَلَيَزِيدَنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُم مَّا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِن رَّبِّكَ طُغْيَانًا وَكُفْرًا ۚ وَأَلْقَيْنَا بَيْنَهُمُ الْعَدَاوَةَ وَالْبَغْضَاءَ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ ۚ كُلَّمَا أَوْقَدُوا نَارًا لِّلْحَرْبِ أَطْفَأَهَا اللَّهُ ۚ وَيَسْعَوْنَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَسَادًا ۚ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ (٦٤)

And the Jews say: The hand of Allah is tied up! Their hands shall be shackled and they shall be cursed for what they say. Nay, both His hands are spread out, He expends as He pleases; and what has been revealed to you from your Lord will certainly make many of them increase in inordinacy and unbelief; and We have put enmity and hatred among them till the day of resurrection; whenever they kindle a fire for war Allah puts it out, and they strive to make mischief in the land; and Allah does not love the mischief-makers. (5:64)

وَاصْنَعِ الْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيِنَا وَلَا تُخَاطِبْنِي فِي الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا ۚ إِنَّهُم مُّغْرَقُونَ (٣٧)

And make the ark before Our eyes and (according to) Our revelation, and do not speak to Me in respect of those who are unjust; surely they shall be drowned. (11:37)

....وَلِتُصْنَعَ عَلَىٰ عَيْنِي (٣٩)

and that you might be brought up before My eyes; (20:39)

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يُبَايِعُونَكَ إِنَّمَا يُبَايِعُونَ اللَّهَ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ ۚ...

Surely those who swear allegiance to you do but swear allegiance to Allah; the hand of Allah is above their hands. (48:10)

وَلِلَّهِ الْمَشْرِقُ وَالْمَغْرِبُ ۚ فَأَيْنَمَا تُوَلُّوا فَثَمَّ وَجْهُ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ (١١٥)

And Allah's is the East and the West, therefore, whither you turn, thither is Allah's purpose; surely Allah is Ample-giving, Knowing. (2:115)

..لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ..

…nothing like a likeness of Him.. (42:11)

Therefore we would view the verses like the ones above as metaphorical usages for the power, presence, knowledge of Allah (SWT) etc. hence We don't accept anthropomorphisms, nor incarnation.

However one should not interpret the Holy Quran based on their own personal opinion and desires, this is called tafseer bil-ray and is not acceptable. Such interpretation opens the door to imposing one's views on the Quran and not taking the view of the Quran. It is one which takes the verses out of their apparent meanings without any reason justifiable to do so.

Quran and Hadith

We believe that both the Holy Quran and the narrations which are reliable and proven are from the divine guidance to us, as long as it never contradicts the Quran[4]. Hence we cannot reject sound narrations that shed light onto the Quranic ayat, nor reject narrations which tell us about our acts of worship as examples.

مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ (٢) وَمَا يَنطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ (٣) إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ (٤)

Your companion does not err, nor does he go astray; Nor does he speak out of desire. It is naught but revelation that is revealed (53:2-3)

مَّا أَفَاءَ اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ رَسُولِهِ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْقُرَىٰ فَلِلَّهِ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ كَيْ لَا يَكُونَ دُولَةً بَيْنَ الْأَغْنِيَاءِ مِنكُمْ ۚ وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانتَهُوا ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ ۖ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ (٧)

[4] Contradiction here is considered as a table contradiction which is considered by informed and insightful people who know how to reconcile and have a better understanding to approach the narrations, as rejection the sound narrations is a bad thing unless we prove it really contradicts Quran as the Quran and Ahlul bayt (AS) agree and are in harmony with each other.

Whatever Allah has restored to His Apostle from the people of the towns, it is for Allah and for the Apostle, and for the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer, so that it may not be a thing taken by turns among the rich of you, and whatever the Apostle gives you, accept it, and from whatever he forbids you, keep back, and be careful of (your duty to) Allah; surely Allah is severe in retributing (evil) (59:7)

وَمَا كَانَ لِمُؤْمِنٍ وَلَا مُؤْمِنَةٍ إِذَا قَضَى اللَّهُ وَرَسُولُهُ أَمْرًا أَن يَكُونَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ مِنْ أَمْرِهِمْ ۗ وَمَن يَعْصِ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ فَقَدْ ضَلَّ ضَلَالًا مُّبِينًا (٣٦)

And it behoves not a believing man and a believing woman that they should have any choice in their matter when Allah and His Apostle have decided a matter; and whoever disobeys Allah and His Apostle, he surely strays off a manifest straying. (33:36)

Therefore those who reject the role of authentic and reliable traditions are actually rejecting something which the Quran directs us towards. However we emphasize that we believe hadith must be proven. We do not believe every word that is attributed to the Prophet (SAWA) can be accepted as there were fabricators and liars that existed within the history muslim society.

Also we believe that the narrations of the Imam's from the progeny of the Prophet (AS) must be followed as well just like the hadith of the Prophet (SAWA) as according to hadith Tahaqalayn which is mutawatir narration[5] (one of the strongest types of hadith we may have).

"***O People! I left such things behind among you that if you keep them you will never go astray after me: The book of God and my progeny meaning the people of my house.***" (Sahih-Tirmidhi, vol. 5, p. 662, the chapter on the virtues of the prophet's progeny, Hadith 3786)

4.1 Imamate (leadership) Part 1

There Should Always be an Imam (AS)

We believe that Allah the Exalted is Wise and All Knowing, hence He has decreed to send Prophets to guide humanity toward felicity, also since Allah is the Wise and all His actions

[5] A report so frequently narrated by in each level of narrators that it removes the chance for conspiracy to forge.

are wise He sends Imams to guide humanity and to make sure the correct views are present which we find in their teachings throughout different times. Hence after our prophet (SAWA) there must be an Imam. This sinless Imam is a human role model which people can follow, and find the right answers from them, they are one of the two weighty things (Thaqalayn).

The Meaning of Imamate

We believe that Imamate in its usage here is not just a leadership in the world, rather this Imamate is a spiritual position that Allah (SWT) has appointed to His chosen servants. This leader is a head of state and a guide in religious affairs, and continues the goals of the prophetic mission even though there are no new prophets after the Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) as the hadith of Manzila states..

This is the position mentioned in the story of Prophet Ibraheem (AS) in the Holy Quran when he request Allah (SWT) to make his progeny as Imams as well and the permission is not given to the sinful and oppressors

وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا ۖ قَالَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِي ۖ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ (١٢٤)

And when his Lord tried Ibrahim with certain words, he fulfilled them. He said: Surely I will make you an Imam of men. Ibrahim said: And of my offspring? My covenant does not include the unjust, said He. (2:124)

We believe that this line of appointed successors of the Prophet (SAWA) continued in the twelve sinless Imams, who were virtuous and equipped with knowledge about the religion and what the needs of the communities in regards to the authentic line of islamic approach and direction.

An Imam Should be Masoom (sinless)

We believe that the Imams must be sinless and devoid of mistakes in performing their duties and roles as Imams so that people will not be pushed away or repelled from the message and guidance. Hence people can follow them as real human role models blossoming within the Islamic line in beautiful submission to Allah the Exalted. Hence we believe that their speech (Qawl) and actions (Fe'l) and tacit approvals (Taqrir) are all important and reliable resources for us.

An Imam is the guardian of the religion appointed by Allah

We believe that the Imam did not come up with a new religion but rather part of his role was to keep and promote the religion of the Prophet (SAWA) hence his role was to teach, introduce, preserve and guide.

An Imam should be the most knowledgeable in his time of Imamate

We believe that the Imam should have all the knowledge required to fulfill his role in regards to guiding and teaching the authentic line of religion no matter if that relates to belief system, or jurisprudence, akhlaaq (morality) or Quranic topics etc. Therefore an Imam becomes a very important source of learning islamic sciences and to take knowledge from them, in fact the most important along with the Quran in his time.

4.2 Imamat (Leadership) - Part 2

Imam Should be Appointed

We believe that the Imam is appointed by Allah (SWT) and his appointment is known through the explicit words of the preceding prophet or Imam (AS) hence we don't believe that the Imam can be selected by a council, nor by a group of people.

وَإِذِ ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبُّهُ بِكَلِمَاتٍ فَأَتَمَّهُنَّ ۖ قَالَ إِنِّي جَاعِلُكَ لِلنَّاسِ إِمَامًا ۖ قَالَ وَمِن ذُرِّيَّتِي ۖ قَالَ لَا يَنَالُ عَهْدِي الظَّالِمِينَ (١٢٤)

And when his Lord tried Ibrahim with certain words, he fulfilled them. He said: Surely I will make you an Imam of men. Ibrahim said: And of my offspring? My covenant does not include the unjust, said He. (2:124)

An important point here is since the Imam must be sinless (masoom) and have the level of knowledge required for the duties and role of Imamah, recognizing and being aware of such qualities in a person is not possible for people to fully comprehend on their own, rather it is something that Allah (SWT) knows and hence He (SWT) is The Only Rightful One to select an Imam or a Prophet. As for how we know such a person is qualified that is informed to us through the servants of Allah (SWT) who have the role of informing, like Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) at Gahdir Khum, therefore people have no role in selecting and choosing an imam as per its technical meaning here, indicating being the appointed successor of the Prophet (SAWA).

In accordance with this, we can find the announcement from the Prophet (SAWA) about Imam Ali (AS) as his successor, such as the mutawatir hadith mentioned in both sunni and shia works about the event of Ghader Khum. A version of it is found in sahih of muslim the famous book of hadith for the sunni school of thought mentions it as follows;

"***In a short time, I will leave you (to my God). I will, however leave two precious things among you: the first is Allah's book in which there is light and guidance... and my progeny. I recommend you not to forget God about (respecting) my progeny. (He repeated this last sentence three times.)"*** "(Sahih-Muslim, vol. 4, p. 1873)

أيها الناس الست أولى بكم من أنفسكم قالوا بلى قال فمن كنت مولاه فعلى مولاده

"O' People, am I not closer to you than yourselves? They replied: Yes. He continued: So,whoever I am his mawla (master: Mawla) then Ali is his mawia."

It is said this hadith (Ghadeer Khumm) was narrated by more than one hundred and ten companions of the Prophet (SAWA) and eighty four Tabe'in. This hadith is of the most authentic and reliable types of hadith called Mutawatir, hence it cannot be rejected. However since it cannot be rejected some have tried to interpret the word Mawla as meaning friend but we believe this is a misinterpretation because it contradicts the context of the narration, also the Prophet stopped such a caravan in the desert to emphasize the friendship of Ali alone may seem to not make sense.

Shaykh Sadooq narrates from Ahmad ibn Ziyad ibn Ja'far al-Hamadani - may God be pleased with him - narrated that Ali ibn Ibrahim ibn Hashem quoted on the authority of his father, on the authority of Muhammad ibn Abi Omayr, on the authority of Ghiyath ibn Ibrahim, on the authority of As-Sadiq Ja'far ibn Muhammad (s), on the authority of his father Muhammad ibn Ali (s), on the authority of his father Ali ibn Al-Hussein (s), on the authority of his father Al-Hussein ibn Ali (s) that the Commander of the Faithful (s) was questioned about the meaning of what God's Prophet (s) said, ***"I will leave behind two heavy things with you: God's Book and my 'Itra." He (s) was asked, "What does "my 'Itra" mean?" He (s) replied, "It is I, Al-Hassan, Al-Hussein and the other nine Divine Leaders from the descendants of Al-Hussein. The ninth of them is their Al-Mahdi who is their Riser. They will not separate themselves from God's Book and God's Book will not separate from them until they meet God's Prophet (s) at his Pool.***"

Besides this, there are other evidences found in the narrations and the historical accounts that point us in the direction of the successorship of Imam Ali (AS), hence such a

gathering of text requires large amounts of time and research and can be a large work itself.

4.3 Imamat (Leadership) - Part 3

Imam Ali (AS) Stood Out Amongst all The Companions

We believe that Imam Ali (AS) had stood out amongst all the companions, however we do reject exaggeration (ghuluw) about Imam Ali (AS), we also believe that all companions are judged for their deeds. Also we should be careful not to just find fault even if it is not true. Among the companions some were very pious people and good people, and some were not good people, some maybe made mistakes later in history, and sometimes we should question what is being mentioned, is it reliable or not about them. so we cannot consider them as sinless or free of mistakes, nor can we consider all their actions as correct. Especially since the Quran tells us in Surah Munafiqoon that there was hypocrites in the life time of the Prophet (SAWA)

وَمِمَّنْ حَوْلَكُم مِّنَ الْأَعْرَابِ مُنَافِقُونَ ۖ وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ ۖ مَرَدُوا عَلَى النِّفَاقِ لَا تَعْلَمُهُمْ ۖ نَحْنُ نَعْلَمُهُمْ ۚ سَنُعَذِّبُهُم مَّرَّتَيْنِ ثُمَّ يُرَدُّونَ إِلَىٰ عَذَابٍ عَظِيمٍ (١٠١)

And from among those who are round about you of the dwellers of the desert there are hypocrites, and from among the people of Medina (also); they are stubborn in hypocrisy; you do not know them; We know them; We will chastise them twice then shall they be turned back to a grievous chastisement (9:101)

There were people who broke their allegiance with the Imam (AS) and actually fought against him, we cannot look at both sides of such battles as innocent and correct. Hence we believe that everyone's actions are judged individually and this is the same principle for humans now and in the lifetime of the Prophet (SAWA) or at any other time.

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُم مِّن ذَكَرٍ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِندَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ (١٣)

O you men! surely We have created you of a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other; surely the most honorable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty); surely Allah is Knowing, Aware. (49:13)

كُلُّ نَفْسٍ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ رَهِينَةٌ (٣٨)

Every soul is held in pledge for what it earns. (74:38)

Hence a person's actions and behavior must be investigated and judged according to what they did, and those who were loyal to the Prophet (SAWA) and were pious Muslims deserve much respect, and those who were hypocrites we reject and those who changed their ways after the Prophets death we cannot accept what they did to themselves. However we should not ignore the fact of those honorable companions.

وَلَوْ قَاتَلَكُمُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا لَوَلَّوُا الْأَدْبَارَ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُونَ وَلِيًّا وَلَا نَصِيرًا (٢٢)

And if those who disbelieve fight with you, they would certainly turn (their) backs, then they would not find any protector or a helper. (48:22)

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُم بِإِحْسَانٍ رَّضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتَهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ (١٠٠)

And (as for) the foremost, the first of the Muhajirs and the Ansars, and those who followed them in goodness, Allah is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, to abide in them for ever; that is the mighty achievement. (9:100)

Even though this is the case with us, we do not advocate for slander, and offending other respected figures, things must be dealt with in a mature and academic manner with respect and kindness and understanding, and most importantly with brotherhood. Both sects can live with coexistence, tolerance and brotherhood together, and both working towards good together. In fact one may ponder deeply on the life of Imam Ali (AS) and how he and the other Imams (AS) handled and lived amongst others.

We believe also that the sayings, actions and tacit approvals of the Imams (AS) are a major recourse for Islamic beliefs, laws and akhlaaq, etc. However when it comes to any narration no matter in which collection of hadith it is, it does not necessarily make it authentic or reliable, hence we have sciences of Rijal (biographical studies of narrators) which studies the narrators and if they're trustworthy or not, if known or unknown to use as criteria at the experts view to determine what is reliable and not. Besides these issues we also believe that if a narration is narrated in a tawatur manner that means there is elimination of the possibility of fabrication and conspiracy due to the frequent amount in each generation of narrators is also reliable. Also we should view all reliable hadith and look at the issue for a while and the expert should attempt to understand the view of the Masoom (AS). Therefore in Shia school of thought both Quran and hadith are used and should be used in harmony with each other and reliable hadith should be examined together.

5.1 Resurrection - Part 1

Our Belief in Resurrection

We believe that all mankind will arrive at a day of resurrection, that is after their death and their time in the intermediary world (alam barzakh). There will be a day when all people will be resurrected and judgment will occur, accountability will occur and some people will enter the hell fire and some will enter paradise.

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۚ لَيَجْمَعَنَّكُمْ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ۗ وَمَنْ أَصْدَقُ مِنَ اللَّهِ حَدِيثًا (٨٧)

Allah, there is no god but He-- He will most certainly gather you together on the resurrection day, there is no doubt in it; and who is more true in word than Allah? (4:87)

فَأَمَّا مَن طَغَىٰ (٣٧) وَآثَرَ الْحَيَاةَ الدُّنْيَا (٣٨) فَإِنَّ الْجَحِيمَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ (٣٩) وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ (٤٠) فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ (٤١)

Then as for him who is inordinate, And prefers the life of this world, Then surely the hell, that is the abode. And as for him who fears to stand in the presence of his Lord and forbids the soul from low desires, Then surely the garden-- that is the abode. (79: 41:37)

We may imagine this worldly life as if it were a bridge to pass through to get to the eternal home, or as if it were a classroom in which we are prepared and tested to ascend to graduation and certification, or a marketplace where we may gather the things we require, or as a farm where we plant for what will come later.

In Nahjul Balagha we find;

إن الدنيا دار صدق لمن صنفها . و دار على لمن تزود منها، ودار موعظة لمن الحظ بها، مسجد احياء الله و مصلى ملائكة الله و مهبط وحى الله و منجر أولياء الشده (نهج البلاغه، كلمات قصار، شماره *(131)*

This world is a right place for the one who deals with it in the right way and the place of prosperity for the one who gathers (precious things) from it, it is the place of worship (mosque) for the lovers of God, the place of prayers for the angels of God, the place of coming down for the revelation of God, and the place of trading for those close to God." (Nahj-ul-balagah, word 131)

Arguments for The Day of Resurrection

Although these arguments are brief and not the entire advanced discussions we can mention some points here;

First: This worldly life is presented when we observe it due to its own nature that it cannot be the end goal and ultimate purpose of human life, because it would be irrational to pass some days in this world with all their difficulties and problem and then be completely annihilated and destroyed forever, cetinaly that is a disappointing, irrational, and vain goal.

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ (١١٥)

What! did you then think that We had created you in vain and that you shall not be returned to Us? (23:115)

Therefore if there was no hereafter, and no resurrection or judgment day this life would be very aimless and vain and meaningless.

Second: The Justice of Allah indicates to us that there has to be a day of judgment, a day where the group of righteous people get their promised rewards and the oppressors get their deserving punishments, because there are crimes that people commit in this world that they can never get fully what he or she deserves for the crime and also the reward some people deserve they can never get the full reward for it in this world.

وَقَالُوا لِجُلُودِهِمْ لِمَ شَهِدتُّمْ عَلَيْنَا ۖ قَالُوا أَنطَقَنَا اللَّهُ الَّذِي أَنطَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ وَهُوَ خَلَقَكُمْ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَإِلَيْهِ تُرْجَعُونَ (٢١)

And they shall say to their skins: Why have you borne witness against us? They shall say: Allah Who makes everything speak has made us speak, and He created you at first, and to Him you shall be brought back. (41:21)

Third: The Holy Quran indicates to those who deny the resurrection, how can they hesitate about it while their own creation was possible due to Allah (SWT). Allah is the one who created all creation and is certainly able to recreate them and resurrect them.

أَفَعَيِينَا بِالْخَلْقِ الْأَوَّلِ ۚ بَلْ هُمْ فِي لَبْسٍ مِّنْ خَلْقٍ جَدِيدٍ (١٥)

Were We then fatigued with the first creation? Yet are they in doubt with regard to a new creation. (50:15)

وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَنَسِيَ خَلْقَهُ ۖ قَالَ مَن يُحْيِي الْعِظَامَ وَهِيَ رَمِيمٌ (٧٨) قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا الَّذِي أَنشَأَهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ ۖ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ (٧٩)

And he strikes out a likeness for Us and forgets his own creation. Says he: Who will give life to the bones when they are rotten? Say: He will give life to them Who brought them into existence at first, and He is cognizant of all creation (36:78-79)

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا أَنَّ اللَّهَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَلَمْ يَعْيَ بِخَلْقِهِنَّ بِقَادِرٍ عَلَىٰ أَن يُحْيِيَ الْمَوْتَىٰ ۚ بَلَىٰ إِنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ (٣٣)

Have they not considered that Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth and was not tired by their creation, is able to give life to the dead? Aye! He has surely power over all things. (46:33)

The Bodily Resurrection

On this day of judgment not only will mankind's souls be resurrected but also there will be a bodily resurrection meaning mankind will be recreated with a body that should be able to face the punishments and rewards to come.

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنسَانُ أَلَّن نَّجْمَعَ عِظَامَهُ (٣) بَلَىٰ قَادِرِينَ عَلَىٰ أَن نُّسَوِّيَ بَنَانَهُ (٤)

Does man think that We shall not gather his bones? Yea! We are able to make complete his very fingertips (75:3-4)

Also we find noble ayaat (verses) of the Holy Quran which address mankind arising from their graves.

فَلَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ تَوْصِيَةً وَلَا إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهِمْ يَرْجِعُونَ (٥٠) وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَإِذَا هُم مِّنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يَنسِلُونَ (٥١)

So they shall not be able to make a bequest, nor shall they return to their families. And the trumpet shall be blown, when lo! from their graves they shall hasten on to their Lord. (36:50-51)

خُشَّعًا أَبْصَارُهُمْ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ كَأَنَّهُمْ جَرَادٌ مُّنتَشِرٌ (٧)

Their eyes cast down, going forth from their graves as if they were scattered locusts, (54:7)

يَوْمَ يَخْرُجُونَ مِنَ الْأَجْدَاثِ سِرَاعًا كَأَنَّهُمْ إِلَىٰ نُصُبٍ يُوفِضُونَ (٤٣)

The day on which they shall come forth from their graves in haste, as if they were hastening on to a goal, (70:43)

Rewards in The Hereafter

We can find many noble verses of the Holy Quran which discuss the rewards and in fact the punishments in the hereafter such as:

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (١٧)

So no soul knows what is hidden for them of that which will refresh the eyes; a reward for what they did. (32:17)

5.2 Resurrection - Part II

Alam Al-Bazakh

We believe that when a person dies, they enter into an intermediate world between this dunya life and the day of resurrection which is called Barzakh. That world is a bit different than this world.

لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ ۚ كَلَّا ۚ إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا ۖ وَمِن وَرَائِهِم بَرْزَخٌ إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ (١٠٠)

Happily I may do good in that which I have left. By no means! it is a (mere) word that he speaks; and before them is a barrier until the day they are raised. (23:100)

لَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا ۚ بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ (١٦٩)

And reckon not those who are killed in Allah's way as dead; nay, they are alive (and) are provided sustenance from their Lord; (3:169)

النَّارُ يُعْرَضُونَ عَلَيْهَا غُدُوًّا وَعَشِيًّا ۖ وَيَوْمَ تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ أَدْخِلُوا آلَ فِرْعَوْنَ أَشَدَّ الْعَذَابِ (٤٦)

The fire; they shall be brought before it (every) morning and evening and on the day when the hour shall come to pass: Make Firon's people enter the severest chastisement. (40:46)

Hence we can see from these noble verses that some people will be in a good situation in the next world and some will be in punishment. Such a punishment is prior to the potential falling into the big fire on the day of fear.

Intercession by the Prophets

Sha’fa (intercession).

We believe that Allah the Exalted has honored the prophets but has specially honored Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) the beloved of Allah, hence Allah has given him a position of intercession (shafa) that is that he can by the Permission of Allah ask for the forgiveness of some people who performed sins however they must meet some conditions.
This intercession is certainly within the program of the Forgiveness of Allah therefore on the day of judgment the Prophet (SAWA) and the Ahlul bayt (AS) can intercede within the program and Permission of Allah (SWT).

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ ۖ يُدَبِّرُ الْأَمْرَ ۖ مَا مِن شَفِيعٍ إِلَّا مِن بَعْدِ إِذْنِهِ ۚ ذَٰلِكُمُ اللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ فَاعْبُدُوهُ ۚ أَفَلَا تَذَكَّرُونَ (٣)

Surely your Lord is Allah, Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods, and He is firm in power, regulating the affair, there is no intercessor except after His permission; this is Allah, your Lord, therefore serve Him; will you not then mind? (10:3)

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ ۚ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ لَّهُ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ۗ مَن ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِندَهُ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِ ۚ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۖ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ ۚ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ ۖ وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ (٢٥٥)

Allah is He besides Whom there is no god, the Everliving, the Self-subsisting by Whom all subsist; slumber does not overtake Him nor sleep; whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth is His; who is he that can intercede with Him but by His permission? He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they cannot comprehend anything out of His knowledge except what He pleases, His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth, and the preservation of them both tires Him not, and He is the Most High, the Great. (2:255)

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنفِقُوا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُم مِّن قَبْلِ أَن يَأْتِيَ يَوْمٌ لَّا بَيْعٌ فِيهِ وَلَا خُلَّةٌ وَلَا شَفَاعَةٌ ۗ وَالْكَافِرُونَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ (٢٥٤)

O you who believe! spend out of what We have given you before the day comes in which there is no bargaining, neither any friendship nor intercession, and the unbelievers-- they are the unjust. (2:254)

When we consider the above-mentioned noble ayats (verses) of the Quran, we can notice that there is no intercession except by the permission of Allah the Exalted. Hence no independent intercession and those who have the right of intercession must be granted that position and status by Allah (SWT).

Hence We believe that the Prophet and the Masoomeen (AS) are allowed to intercede for some people who made some slips but could not make it to paradise otherwise. Hence Allah will allow them to ask for their forgiveness within the program and permission of Allah the Exalted. However this intercession has conditions.

يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يَشْفَعُونَ إِلَّا لِمَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ وَهُم مِّنْ خَشْيَتِهِ مُشْفِقُونَ (٢٨)

He knows what is before them and what is behind them, and they do not intercede except for him whom He approves and for fear of Him they tremble. (21:28)

Witnesses on The Day of Judgment

We believe that Allah (SWT) is the witness over all of his creation, however Allah (SWT) has granted some things to be witnesses as an example one's body parts and the earth are among the witnesses on that day.

الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَيْدِيهِمْ وَتَشْهَدُ أَرْجُلُهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ (٦٥)

On that day We will set a seal upon their mouths, and their hands shall speak to Us, and their feet shall bear witness of what they earned. (36:65)

يَوْمَئِذٍ تُحَدِّثُ أَخْبَارَهَا (٤) بِأَنَّ رَبَّكَ أَوْحَىٰ لَهَا (٥)

On that day she shall tell her news, Because your Lord had inspired her. (99:4:5)

يَوْمَ تَرَوْنَهَا تَذْهَلُ كُلُّ مُرْضِعَةٍ عَمَّا أَرْضَعَتْ وَتَضَعُ كُلُّ ذَاتِ حَمْلٍ حَمْلَهَا وَتَرَى النَّاسَ سُكَارَىٰ وَمَا هُم بِسُكَارَىٰ وَلَٰكِنَّ عَذَابَ اللَّهِ شَدِيدٌ (٢)

On the day when you shall see it, every woman giving suck shall quit in confusion what she suckled, and every pregnant woman shall lay down her burden, and you shall see men intoxicated, and they shall not be intoxicated but the chastisement of Allah will be severe. (22:2)

May Allah save all of us from the hassles and difficulties of such a day, Bihaqqi of Prophet and his beloved progeny: